



# NEWS RELEASE

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**For Immediate Release**

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## Seattle Parks, citizens' committee to meet with community about potential park funding ballot measure

Seattle Parks and Recreation will host three community meetings in January to get feedback on the work done by the Parks Legacy Citizens' Advisory Committee in preparation for a potential 2014 park and recreation funding ballot measure.

The meetings will be held:

- Thursday, January 23, International District/Chinatown Community Center, 719 8<sup>th</sup> Ave. S, at 6 p.m.
- Saturday, January 25, High Point Community Center, 6920 34<sup>th</sup> Ave. SW, 1 p.m. (free childcare will be provided)
- Thursday, January 30, Bitter Lake Community Center, 13035 Linden Ave. N, at 7 p.m.

The meetings will feature a brief presentation that describes how the committee has prioritized a list of potential investment initiatives. That will be followed by professionally facilitated workshops that seek community input in three specific areas.

1. Priorities. Did the Committee find the right balance among: 1) taking care of the park and recreation assets that the City already owns; 2) funding programs, classes and services for the community; and 3) preparing for the future by developing "land banked" park properties into new parks and acquiring new park land?
2. Size. Attendees will learn how different levels of funding affect homeowner taxes, and then give feedback on which size of funding package seems appropriate.
3. Funding mechanism. Facilitators will explain the differences between short-term, long-term, and permanent levies, and how those compare to the formation of a metropolitan parks district (MPD). Attendees will then be asked to give feedback on which mechanism is most suitable for Seattle, and will be offered the chance to express thoughts or concerns about each option.

Seattle Parks and Recreation began working on the Park Legacy Plan, which forms the basis of a ballot funding measure, more than a year ago. The process began with a series of community and park-user surveys, and culminated with six public meetings throughout the city to gather input. The process has focused on bringing a chorus of voices into the conversation about how Seattle Parks and Recreation can meet the growing needs of a vibrant city.

After Seattle Parks published the second draft of the Parks Legacy Plan in June 2013, the Mayor and City Council convened a volunteer Parks Legacy Citizens' Advisory Committee to advise them on what a park funding ballot measure should pay for and what type of funding mechanism it should be – a levy or a metropolitan parks district.

In December, the committee released its preliminary report and a first draft of a prioritized list of programs and services it believes should be funded. At each of its meetings, the committee took public input, and it held a public hearing in November.

At the community meetings in January, the public will learn more about the committee's recommendations, become educated on the possible funding options, and meet and talk with committee members.

After the January community meetings, the committee will reconvene in February to review, and perhaps revise, its preliminary recommendations based on the public input; and they will discuss and make a recommendation on the size and type of the funding measure. The committee will send its final recommendations to the Mayor and City Council on March 12.

Committee members are: Barbara Wright, Co-Chair; Charlie Zaragoza, Co-Chair; Thatcher Bailey; Steve Daschle; Juli Farris; Bill Farmer; Thomas Goldstein; Jessie Israel; Diana Kincaid; Michael Maddux; Brice Maryman; Yalonda Gill Masundire; Mustapha Math; Erika Melroy; and David Namura.

To learn more, read the Legacy Committee's Interim Report. It's available at [www.seattle.gov/parks/legacy/committee](http://www.seattle.gov/parks/legacy/committee), or in hard copy at community centers and pools. The Interim Report details the committee's process, rationale, and interim recommendations.

Detailed information about each proposed investment and possible funding mechanisms is also available on the Parks Legacy Citizens' Advisory Committee website, and will be available at the meetings.

Those who want to give input, but are not able to come to the meetings can give written comments, which bear equal weight to verbal comments. Please email comments to [parkslegacy@seattle.gov](mailto:parkslegacy@seattle.gov).

For interpretation services or special accommodations at the meeting, please email [parkslegacy@seattle.gov](mailto:parkslegacy@seattle.gov) or call Susanne Rockwell (206-733-9702).

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